

I'll Go to the Ends of the Earth for You Deciding Among Exploration Proposals

Mr. Jenkins
US History
Beginnings to 1600

What were the risks and possible benefits of the European voyages of exploration during the 1400's and 1500's?

Objectives:

- Describe the exploration goals of different explorers such as: John Cabot, Ponce de Leon, Hernando Cortes, and Jacques Cartier.
- Compare the explorations of early Europeans with present-day explorations

Ask:

- Name some of the early European explorers you remember from previous classes. (post on board)
- Describe the goals and effects of these expeditions.

Task:

- Remind students to consider themselves as rulers of European nation states in the 1400's and 1500's. You are being approached often by adventurers with grand schemes to explore distant lands that will provide riches, power, and glory to the nation.
- Provide activity sheet to each and have them rank the top three proposals – 5 minutes.
- In groups of three or so, compare individual rankings and agree on which three proposals to fund. While discussing, convince others of your opinions while being open minded to opposing arguments. (15 min)
- Develop written arguments for your choices.
- As a class, discuss the relative merits and potential benefits of each proposal.
- Each of the proposals actually describes an European adventurer who explored the western hemisphere in the late 1400's and 1500's.
- Who was the explorer whose goals were described in each of the proposals?
 1. Drake
 2. Cabot
 3. Cortes
 4. Cartier
 5. Leon

Conclusion:

- What were the dilemmas faced by the rulers who had to decide whom to support?
- Speculate about voyages that may have been rejected. Where might they have been going? What benefits might they have promised the rulers?
- Compare past exploration with today's space and oceanic adventures.
- Issues such as funding and benefits.

- What are similarities of past and future exploration that could be viewed as negative?

Evaluation:

- Participation
- Quality and clarity of written arguments